California GARDEN

SINCE 1909 JUNE-JULY, 1966 VOL. 57 NO. 3

50 Cents

GROW-IT-YOURSELF ISSUE

Begonias • Bonsais • Perennials • Hanging Baskets • Apartment Patios

FLORAL EVENTS

JUNE - JULY, 1966

SAN DIEGO FLORAL ASSOCIATION PROGRAMS

Third Tuesday, 8 p.m. Floral Building, Balboa Park
Chairman — Mrs. Edward Penprase

Regular Meeting, June 21, 8 p.m.

Ruth Penprase, Vice President of the Floral Association will show colored slides of her trip to South America. It was a Camera Club Tour, so her pictures are really special. Traditionally the June meeting is a Potluck dinner of the Floral Club honoring new members. New officers will be installed.

There will be no July meeting.

SAN DIEGO FLORAL ASSOCIATION CLASSES

will be discontinued during the Summer Months.
For information on Fall Classes call Mrs. Roland Hoyt, Chairman, 296-2757

FLOWER SHOWS

MAY		
26-28	2nd Annual FLOWER & GARDEN SHOW	MISSION VALLEY CENTER Men's Garden Club
28-29	BONSAI SHOW	FLORAL ASSOCIATION BLDG. San Diego Bonsai Soc. Inc.
JUNE		
17-19	CACTUS & SUCCULENT SHOW	L.A. STATE & COUNTY ARBORETUM 301 N. Baldwin, Arcadia, Calif. Cactus & Succulent Soc. of America
21-25	15th ANNUAL CONVENTION "Beauty Means Business"	VACATION VILLAGE, SAN DIEGO California Landscape Contractor's Assn.
12-25	12th ANNUAL FUCHSIA & SHADE PLANT SHOW "Fuchsias in Fairyland"	ORANGE CO. FAIRGROUNDS Calif. Nat. Fuchsia Society
24-July 4	SAN DIEGO COUNTY FAIR	S.D. COUNTY FAIR, DEL MAR
JULY		
16-17	BEGONIA & SHADE PLANT SHOW	L.A. COUNTY & STATE ARBORETUM San Gabriel Valley Br., Amer. Begonia Soc.

COMING

AUGUST

1-12	34th Annual Field Science & Conservation Workshop Santa Barbara U.C. Extension	
6- 7	Dahlia Show	CONFERENCE BLDG., Balboa Park S. D. County Dahlia Soc.

SAN DIEGO BOTANICAL-GARDEN FOUNDATION, Inc.

June 9th Business Meeting
Nomination of Officers, and presenting business for the Annual Meeting.

July 14 Annual Meeting.

New Officers of the Floral Association

President:
Mrs. Emmett W. Fowler

Vice President:
Capt. Chas. E. Spiegel

Treasurer:
Dr. George W. Bremner

Cor. Secretary:
Mrs. Norman O'Farrell

Rec. Secretary:
Mrs. W. E. Mackintosh

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Among Our Contributors

Dee and Clem Runner were pioneer growers of exotic fruits on a large ranch in the North County. As President of the Starlight Garden Club, he knew most of the North County growers. Owners of the La Mesa Nursery for the past 7 years, he also teaches beginner's Gardening Classes in two high schools.

Howard M. Voss of Cardiff-by-the-Sea is an engineer whose hobby of growing Tuberous Begonias has developed into the Westview Begonia Gardens, a Blue Ribbon winner at the Fair last year.

Jack W. Ward, teacher of history at Chula Vista High School is an authority on Opuntia Cactus. He is exhibiting his collection of over 30 hanging basket plantings by request at the Men's Garden Club Show and at the Fair also.

Martha H. Rosenberg, Recording Secretary of the Floral Association, is also a member of the Southwestern Judge's Council and the Flower Arrangers' Guild of San Diego. From childhood she liked to grow things and has always found a garden spot to grow them.

George Fujimoto, President of the San Diego Bonsai Society, Inc. has been growing Bonsais for over 15 years and now has about 50 Bonsai plants. He studied with Mr. Naka. He likes to work best with *Pinus thumbergia.*

During the absence of Ed Ogden, his column will be taken over by Richard A. Hull of the Landscaping Department of the San Diego Schools and an active member of the Men's Garden Club. He is known to his friends as **Dick Hull, plantsman.** He has gardened all his life, managed nurseries, and grown azaleas commercially in Oregon.

CALIFORNIA GARDEN

June-July-1966

Vol. 57 No. 3

THE COVER

Tuberous Begonia, Double Camellia Picotee Type. White with Rosy Red Edges. Rosecroft Begonia Gardens. *Photo by Mackintosh*

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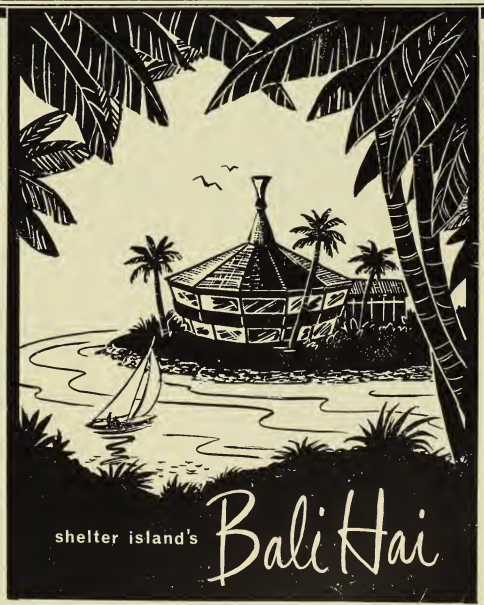

CANTONESE DINNERS — POLYNESIAN FLOOR SHOWS
at Point Loma's Exotic Showplace 222-1181
Your Host, Tom Ham

SOME ENCHANTED EVENINGS

Perfume in the Patio

by Dee and Clem Runner

Beaumontia *grandiflora.* Patio of Alice Clark. *Photo by Mackintosh*

We have found a few of the lesser-known facts about three old favorites that we hope that you will enjoy with us. We have in mind some of the exotic vines set apart by the charms of rare perfumes. These are not the "clinging vine" type, but bold and vigorous climbers: Beaumontia *grandiflora,* Stephanotis *floribunda* and Mandevilla *suaveolens.*

Beaumont *grandiflora,* Herald Trumpet, is a beautiful, woody, climbing plant native to India, belonging to the Periwinkle family, Apocynaceae. It is known to most of us as the Easter Lily vine because of the large white trumpet-shaped flowers so fragrant in early spring, and resembling our own Easter Lily. Blooms are borne on two, or three-year-old wood, and are in evidence from May to September. Leaves are opposite one another, approximately 8-10 inches long, a leathery and shiny dark green, giving the vine a lush tropical effect. It espaliers beautifully against South or West wall. Another vine to delight the senses is fragrant Stephanotis *floribunda* (Family Asclepiadaceae) better known as "Madagascar Jasmine." This is the only one in general cultivation. This native of the Old World tropics is an excellent evergreen climber for the warm greenhouse and garden. The lovely flowers are very white and very waxy, remaining fresh a long while, both on the vine and when cut for containers. In the East, perhaps more than in the West, it is the choice for bridal bouquets and fashionable floral decor. The botanical name is derived from the word "stephanos," meaning crown, and "otos," meaning ear, which refers to the ear-shaped appearance of the stamens. The twining stems of this fast growing friend need the support of wires or trellis. Leaves are opposite, smooth and shiny, elliptic, very deep green, approximately 3-5 inches long. The foliage loves a fine spray during the hot days of summer, less water in winter. Weak shoots should be cut away in February, and vigorous ones shortened.

We pioneered North of Escondido when little else was there, even before Highway 395! Our great pleasures were the subtropicals and plants of unusual nature. We had a thrilling out-of-doors (if little else), as the mountains and native growth surrounded us. Also the leanest soil and largest boulders imaginable. In our lathhouse was a joy of an old Fatshedera lizei, which had grown uninhibited throughout the years to completely cover the area. It was truly luxurious, with its highly-polished dark green lobe-shaped leaves, and long trailing stems twining in and out. It shaded the Clivias, the Bergenias, the choice camellias, and our pride and joy, the Doryanthus *Palmeri,* Australian Spear Lily—the only one in captivity in our neighborhood! It filled one entire half of the lathhouse, thrusting through the top with its first brilliant bloom spikes, after many years of maturing. It came to the nursery with us, via a large tub (a major project), and was a prize specimen for many months.

Our greatest joy, though, was the Chilean Jasmine, Mandevilla *suaveolens,* another climbing shrub of the Apocynaceae family, from Argentina. It twined throughout the Fatshedera, and what beauty and fragrance greeted our friends on a warm summer evening as the lovely white clusters clung to the night. This vine can be confined better than its friends, and we often have it in gallon size in the nursery. It is surprising that these vines, as we knew and grew them, survived so many years of heat and cold, and whatever else befell them.

Planting and propagation of these hardy climbers is much the same. They must have good drainage and warmth. If the soil is poor, stones and sphagnum or tufts of grass should line the basin before compost material is added. Equal parts of loam or coarse sand, peat, and leaf-mold seem to be most desirable.

All are propagated from cuttings, in a propagating box with plastic or glassed cover, in early Spring. Bottom warmth hastens growing.

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Flower-decked Wedding Cake for the Daughter of Mrs. Clinton Abbott, President of the Floral Association.

Trends In Flower Arranging Through The Years

by Alice M. Rainford

At the turn of the century most of the florists in California had learned their trade in Europe. As our climate is similar to that of France and southern Italy, the growing and marketing of flowers here, presented no problems to the foreign-trained florists. San Francisco and Oakland, in particular, provided an opportunity for the industry. Out-of-doors growing of flowers in great variety was possible and there was a ready market, if they sold at a reasonable price.

According to a second-generation florist, the fashion of using massed color effects, so popular in San Francisco, largely developed from the necessity of displaying in a small space a good variety of wares, and for the quick and easy handling of more-or less standard-sized bunches that could be removed and wrapped for sale without the expense of boxes. People admired the profusion, and gradually, with more care in grouping, a style evolved in which line, mass and color were considered and real artistry was developed. Kate Sessions, when a young girl growing up in Oakland, had a lovely garden to call upon and her friends constantly asked her to arrange flowers either from their own gardens or from hers. Miss Sessions did not like the stiff, formal arrangements that the florists made, so she created lovely, loose sprays.

A favorite piece that Miss Sessions created was one she called a crescent spray. Two graduated sprays of flowers, such as carnations, would be made and then the two ends would be overlapped and firmly tied. She used a coarse, green linen thread. After this a small handful of moss or foliage was bound over the stems and a few short-stemmed flowers thrust into this so as to hide the joining.

In her florist shop, which she opened in San Diego, Miss Sessions made, for many years, her favorite crescent sprays, and in addition, the regulation wreaths, stars, crosses, pillows, and organization emblems. I recall a fire-chief's funeral, for which we made helmets, ladders, fire-bells and a fire ax. Such emblems were made of solid work: the flowers used were generally carnations and double Cherokee roses. Miss Sessions had a long hedge of roses, a field of carnations and, in season, white stock.

To make the emblems a wire frame was stuffed with damp moss. Short-stemmed flowers were thrust in and, if necessary, pinned with a greening pin made like a hairpin. Other flowers might be fastened to a toothpick attached to a wire. Some use is still made of these green picks. Frames were generally filled the night before a morning service and well sprinkled, then could be quickly decorated with ribbon, usually lettered in gold with the donor's name or that of the deceased. In most Catholic and Episcopal churches, flowers were seldom permitted, so were simply taken to the cemetery for the interment service.

There the flowers were banked about the casket.

By 1935 we had much more demand for loose sprays and baskets and a design was called a panel, which was placed on an easel.

We used a moss foundation, which kept the flowers fresh. The decoration of floats for the Pasadena Annual Tournament of Roses has revived the interest in solid work, much of which is done by applying glue or paste to the flowers. Many of the more graceful effects are done Hawaiian fashion with the flowers strung on fine wire.

During the thirties, there was a trend again towards the rather formal work, especially for table decorations and corsages. We removed flowers from their stems and used artificial stems wound with matching or contrasting-colored ribbon. This might be laid on a table or coiled up and worn as a corsage. I recall one table on which large white chrysanthemums were used with stems wrapped in heavy white satin. They were laid on a luncheon table for a bride-to-be.

Smilax, a member of the asparagus family, was once used in decorating to such an extent that nurserymen devoted whole lath-houses to its cultivation. It was grown on strings stretching from the ground to the roof and as the tendrils grew they were carefully twined around the strings until the string when grown to full height would be as large as one's arm. Such strands were sold for twenty-five to fifty cents and were used profusely for table decorations and garlands.

One decoration, at a party given for a group of friends about to start on a world cruise included room decorations as well as the table. Smilax was draped on the walls in garlands which were caught up in the corners of the room and reached from ceiling to floor. At the sides of the bay window, also, there was a smilax drapery and rods held small vases of Cecile Brunner roses. On the back of each chair was tied a corsage of roses and violets bearing a ribbon lettered with a guest's name; this served as a place card. The centerpiece was a model of the steamship bearing the name of the liner upon which the voyagers were to embark; surrounding it was a sea of smilax, Cecile Brunner roses and violets. Near the plates were scattered crystallized rose petals and violets, a delicious confection made by two ladies in Pasadena and very popular at that time.

As early as 1906 we were also influenced by Japanese flower arrangers. Naobumi Honda held classes at Kate Sessions's store and although few attained his proficiency, we learned a great deal from him; the entire community of San Diego was benefited. Among his class members I recall Mrs. Julius Wangenheim and her sister, Miss Alice Klauber, whose artistic ability and impact upon the San Diego Floral Association, no one could doubt.

During all this fashion change, credit must be given to the San Diego Floral Association and such groups for continuously advocating the love of natural beauty and simplicity in the use of flowers. In every decade, there were those like Kate Sessions who rebelled at the lavish and standardized arrangements done in the New York and European styles. During the years from 1940 to 1950, flower bowls and baskets were arranged quite informally, with attention to contrasts in color and size, involving much artistic endeavor.

Pictures of flower shows staged during the early days by the San Diego Floral Association show that we followed the British plan of exhibiting flowers singly in vases, or in trays of

(continued on page 17)

Photo by Stromberg

Original Rainford Flower Shop; 1110 Fourth Avenue, Showing Advanced Methods of Floral Display.

TUBEROUS BEGONIAS

Their Care and Culture

by Howard M. Voss

Those of you who have not grown tuberous begonias have missed one of the most rewarding garden pleasures. These beautiful plants with large velvety leaves and king-size flowers may be had in every color except blue and dozens of shades of each. You may have varieties for beds or specimen plants that look like giant roses, carnations, camellias, gardenias or daffodils. There are also types for hanging baskets of dripping color or gay multi-flowered ones for borders. Begonias are not difficult to grow. On the contrary, with reasonable care and patience, anyone may have beautiful flowering plants to enjoy throughout the summer and fall months.

In our nursery we start thousands of tubers each year. They arrive around the first of February from the growing grounds near Santa Cruz, California and are sorted out into flats and kept in a cool basement. When sprouts form, the tubers are planted, sixteen to a flat, in a very loose soil made up of leaf mold, redwood soil amendment, and compost. The flats are watered and placed in a warm greenhouse where the temperature is maintained at 65 degrees during the night. During overcast days fluorescent lamps are used to maintain sufficient light. Our plants must be large and have large flowers by the middle of June for exhibiting. Under normal spring weather conditions this is 2 or 3 weeks ahead of the time they would naturally come to flower. After the plants have grown about 4 inches high and have developed a heavy root system they are moved from the greenhouses to large beds in lath houses. This is usually around the middle of April. The soil in the beds does not have leaf mold but the same soil amendment and compost with the addition of some fine sand, a mixture not much different from our starting soil. A sprinkler system is used that wets the plants as well as the roots and saves a great deal of time. With a complete fertilizer program the plants grow rapidly and when the first large flower opens, the plant is placed in a plastic pot. The root mass determines the pot size which varies from 7 to 10 inches in diameter and from 5 to 7 inches in depth.

We have found during our years of growing tuberous begonias that light is probably the most important factor in the development of prize winning plants. They do very well under glass with a minimum amount of diffusion. They do nearly as well, in our coastal location, under a lath structure with about 1½-inch spacing between laths. As the amount of light is decreased the plant gets leggy and the flowers are fewer and smaller. The intermittent strong light and shade provided by lath or a lacy tree is ideal for growing. Farther inland it may be necessary to use less spacing between lath because of stronger light and higher temperatures. We have grown our plants under different makes and types of shade cloth from 40% to 80% shade; our results have not been conclusive. However, we have been able to grow larger plants and flowers under lath, with the lath running north and south of course.

Tuberous begonias absorb much food and moisture through their leaves. Because of this many commercial growers are near the coast, Point Loma, Cardiff-by-the-Sea, Capitola and Santa Cruz, where the humidity is relatively high. This does not mean that plants will not grow well many miles inland. All that is necessary is to provide some moisture to the air which can be done with a sprinkler or mist spray near your tuberous begonias. If they are under a tree and near lawn or other gardens, keep the area around the plants moist during the low humidity hours of the day. Early morning sun is very beneficial to your plants. However, direct rays from the sun for even a few minutes during hot days between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. will damage the foliage and cause flowers to drop. Too much shade also causes flower and bud drop. They will do very well in partial shade, under a tree or lath shelter, an open covered patio or the north side of a solid fence or on the north side of your home. Remember that like other flowering plants the more light they receive the more flowers they produce.

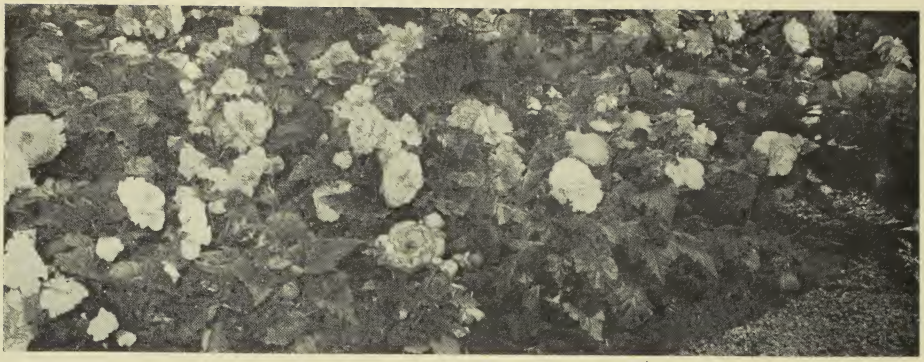


Photo courtesy of Del Mar County Fair

Blue Ribbon Tuberous Begonias grown in Westview Gardens by Howard M. Voss.

Tuberous begonias require much less water than most people believe. More tubers are lost from decay because of too much water than from too little water. We check the soil around the plants each day and water them only when the soil shows dryness on top. We use enough water so that it drains from the pot or through the beds, and also sprinkle water on the leaves. During very warm weather it may be necessary to water or fog them each day. If it is cool and overcast two or three days may pass without the need for water. Plants in plastic pots require considerably less water than those in planters, large beds or clay pots.

Regular feeding with most any fish base fertilizer is needed to continue the growth of your plants and for the production of strong stems and large flowers. Tuberous begonias are heavy feeders. We use Country Squire super grow (10-5-5) while the plants are growing then change to Country Squire super bloom (4-10-6) when the plants are flowering. They should be fed every two weeks at the regular strength of one tablespoonful to a gallon of water. Be sure the soil is moist and apply as much liquid as you would in a regular watering. Liquid fertilizer should be applied to the leaves as well as to the root system. We sprinkle and fertilize in the late afternoon or early evening when there is less chance of evaporation. This gives the plants a longer period to absorb food and water and also discourages moths and other night flying insects from laying eggs on the leaves, which in a short time turn into very hungry worms. To control the worm problem we spray in the early morning with Ortho Isotox. This very effective insecticide not only kills the insects by suffocation but also kills the worm when he starts eating the leaf. Be sure when spraying that you get under the leaves where most of the damage is done.

Powdery mildew, which is a fungus, is about the only concern that we now have, but with careful hybridizing to eliminate strains that are more susceptible to mildew and with improved insecticides it really is not a problem at all. Tuberous begonia plants need air circulating around them so the first thing to do is to be sure the plants are not too close together and that they are not in a corner where moving air cannot get around them. We have found that when plants are too close together or close to a wall, it encourages the fungus to form and spread. Powdery mildew looks like a very fine gray powder and is quite common on some varieties of roses. It starts on the underside of tuberous begonia leaves, so an occasional check is necessary. If and when you find mildew, an application of Cooke's Doo Spray will usually control it. We spray the affected leaves until the mildew dissolves and washes away and repeat the treatment in two or three days if we see any further sign of the fungus. Usually two applications will completely eliminate the mildew and reduce the possibility of spreading.

When the blooming season comes to an end you will find the leaves dropping and no new flower buds, a sign of dormancy. At this time no further feeding or watering is needed. If the pot it laid over on its side for a few weeks, the stem will break cleanly away from the tuber. Keep the pot in your garage or most any dry place until February or March when a sprout or sprouts will start growing from the tuber, which is the time to replant it. We remove the tuber from the pot and brush all soil and dead roots away. Then we rejuvenate the planting medium by mixing a soil amendment such as medium cascade or redwood compost, which can be obtained from your local nursery, with the soil from the pot. Mix enough soil amendment so that the pot will drain well but still hold moisture for some time. Place the sprouted tuber just under the top of the soil. When planting upright tubers, put supporting stakes at the back, the leaves will always point towards the front. Water the pot well so the soil is dampened clear through. From then on, water only when the soil shows dryness on top and give it as much light as you can—the more light the faster it will grow. In San Diego county, normally we do not get extremely hot weather until late April or early May. Be careful to protect your plants during real hot days. After two leaves have formed and the plant is about three or four inches in diameter, start your feeding program with formula 10-5-5 fish emulsion base fertilizer.

In July you will have beautiful flowers with the same color and form as those of the year before. They will continue to give you gorgeous blooms into October and November, depending upon the weather, and make you peacock-proud of your display of tuberous begonias.

SILVER TREES

A Horticultural Mint at Quail Park

by Chauncy I. Jerabek

Quail Gardens Foundation, Inc., in Encinitas, has a project under way that is already well worth visiting. In time it should be a mecca for all tree enthusiasts. About thirty years ago, when Ruth Larabee was living on the rolling acreage which she later gave to the county, she planted a silver tree on one of her western slopes. She planted well. Now that silver beauty is the granddad of a stand of trees which P. J. Miller, who has charge of the park now, is busily turning into a hillside of leafy silver. It would be interesting to know if Mrs. Larabee heard about this tree from Kate Sessions who delighted to extoll its merits. The climax of the K.O.S. talk was when she opened a jewel box and produced "a seed with its own parachute."

The genus *Leucadendron* and its species, *argenteum,* belong to the colorful family of Proteas, better known for its spectacular flowering plants. The trees are found only on the slopes of Table Mountain in Cape Town, where they are known as Silwerboom or Witleboom. Ever since Jane Minshall, landscape architect for San Diego city schools, saw a silver tree when she was a child, she had cherished a desire to see it again in its native habitat. Last year she went to South Africa and brought back colored slides of *Leucadendron argenteum,* and the flowering proteas around

Young silver trees planted on hillside near old male blossoming tree at Quail Park Botanic Gardens under the San Diego County Department of Parks and Recreation.

it, to illustrate what she described as the most thrilling highlight of her trip.

The silver tree has been grown in Southern California for a long time but never in abundance. If conditions are right, it may soar to 50 feet but in San Diego County the majority never reach half that height. On its native hillsides it can take the heavy rains, which drain off quickly, and it seems to thrive on the long dry season that follows. Mr. Miller protects his trees with boards that prevent the soil from washing down over the bases of the trunks. He fills the area with gravel to make doubly sure no fungus forms under the bark to cut off the food supply. In the Quail Park group, near the large male specimen, which is blooming at this season, there are several younger female trees that set good seed cones. Little by little, young three-year-old trees about four feet high, planted close to each other for protection, are clothing the hill.

When young, even the trunk of this small slender upright tree is covered with closely overlapping leaves that spring directly from the branches without petioles. When they fall off they leave scars in parallel lines. As the plant grows older the trunk bulges between scars so it resembles an elephant's leg in both color and texture. The leaves are a marvelous jade or blue-green, covered on both sides with a silvery pubescense that flashes in the sunlight. These lance-shaped leaves, 3 to 5 inches long and one inch or more wide, make long-lasting bookmarks with textures as stroking-soft as kitten's fur.

Flower heads are borne at the tips of the leafy branches but male and female blooms are on separate trees. The free-flowering male inflorescence is ball-like and pinkish, and fluffed out all over with golden stamens. When dried they look like rounds of silver filings. The pistillate blooms are fewer. Eventually they develop into hard blackish-brown cones. Tucked between their petal-like scales are tufts of white cotton which work their way out and unfold into four narrow ribs covered with puffs of wool which act as a parachute for the shiny brown seed case. The package splits and drops a strong hair-like thread from which dangles a two-sided, dark brown oval seed that paratroops on the breeze to what is hoped will be a fruitful landing.

The *Leucadendron argenteum* is propagated by seeds which Miller plants in 5 inch pots filled with equal parts of sand, garden soil and decomposed granite, mounded on top. The seed is planted half an inch deep and the soil watered around the edge of the pot. The plants show in two weeks or less and are shifted to larger sized pots as they grow. When set out, drainage is always of primary importance. Only infrequent watering is required. The trees are fed occasionally with ammonium sulphate—never with organic fertilizer. The large tree at Quail Park has withstood short periods of 26 degree temperatures.

W. F. Sinjen, who lives in Ocean Beach is probably responsible for more plantings of silver trees than anyone else here. He has a fine female specimen, fifteen years old on the slopes of his front garden. A neighbor up the hill has a male tree but, as Sinjen says, "Alas, the wind does not blow the right way to promote seeds on my tree." It is to be hoped that more gardeners with the right soil and situation plus a favorable breeze will try to grow this fantastic tree.

Male and Female Blooms, showing pendant seed cone of Silver Tree *Leucadendron argenteum.*

HANGING BASKET and CONTAINER CULTURE

by Jack W. Ward

Basket gardening is basically pot gardening. Those who have done most of their gardening in pots do not have to change practices.

However, there are some exceptions to rules followed for pots on the ground. Baskets take more water and more fertilizer. In addition, baskets come in other media than clay; these include wood, wire-moss, and plastic.

Uses of Baskets

Basket culture is almost essential for trailing plants. Could *Sedum morganiaum, Aporocactus flagelliformis* or *Rhipsalis paradoxa* be shown to greater advantage by any other method? Many other plants, which do not ordinarily trail, take on a special glamour and beauty when adapted to baskets. Among these are *Opuntia serpentina, Sedum adolphii* and *Portulacaria afra.* Actually, almost any species can be placed in a basket and, with certain modifications from the normal planting manner, be as beautiful as most of the plants one usually finds suspended in the air.

When one has a limited space, more planting room can be gained by using baskets. This is especially true of patio areas, porches and planter beds beside a house. If you wish to build a wood-framework overhang next to garden walls or in a corner of the yard, you may also gain additional planting space.

Containers

Commercial basket containers are rather stereotyped. One may buy the wire basket, which must be lined with spaghnum moss, or the redwood or cedar slat basket, or the solid redwood or cedar basket. Occasionally, one may find unusual or exotic baskets made from clay or plastic. Pieces of driftwood with deep cavities are either hard to find or expensive to buy. Other exotic types to be observed are sections of palm trunk and sections of whole tree trunk cored-out.

The cheapest basket is just a plain clay pot. Those trailing plants such as *Crassula perforata* and *Plectranthus purpuratus* (Charlie Plant), which completely cover the container do not need more expensive containers than cheap clay pots.

Wire baskets dry out most quickly, but this may be partly alleviated if one puts a clay or plastic saucer between the spaghnum moss in the bottom and the potting mix. The advantages of a wire basket are that one may plant suckering plants, or plant through the framework spaces for a dense, lush look.

Slat baskets may be used in two different ways. One may line them with spaghnum moss and plant them as solid containers, or pots may be set in them. The latter method is advantageous when one wishes to change his basket displays without a great amount of work. If slat baskets are used as permanent containers, clay saucers must be placed in the bottom to allow a little water reserve for plants.

Solid wood boxes are best for moisture retention and serve best for most of the epiphytic cacti and almost all the succulents. Without doubt, this is the best type container for ferns, fuchsias, begonias, etc. which need maximum moisture and acid soil.

Clay pots dry out more rapidly than solid wood but less rapidly than slat or wire baskets, and are suitable for all plants except the most tender.

Planting Mix

Inasmuch as hanging containers dry out more quickly than if they were placed on the ground, certain precautions must be taken. As a rule, the planting mix should be well drained but richer in leaf mold and peat moss than for most ground containers. Recently, I have discovered that a proportion of around ¾ commercial planting mix and ¼ builders-sand works best for cacti and succulents. For non-cacti and non-succulents, use 100 per cent commercial planting mix.

Before putting planting mix in a pot or solid wooden container, fill with broken pots or crushed rock to a depth of two to three inches; this helps keep drainage open at the bottom.

As a general rule, garden soils do not fit the requirements of basket culture. Sandy soil gives good drainage but drys out too quickly and is leached of nutrients too quickly. Garden loam usually does not retain enough moisture. Clay soil does not give adequate drainage and retains too many alkaline and fertilizer salts. In addition, once that clay soil drys out, it becomes very difficult for water to penetrate it. Drying out also causes it to shrink from the sides of the pot, allowing the water to run out quickly without penetrating the soil itself.

If you wish to use soil in your basket culture, a good proportion would be two parts garden loam, one part coarse sand, two parts peat moss, two parts leaf mold and one part steer manure.

It is best to have your planting mix slightly damp but not wet. Some authorities also recommend soaking your containers in water before start-

ing to plant, but I have not seen any advantage gained by this practice.

Care

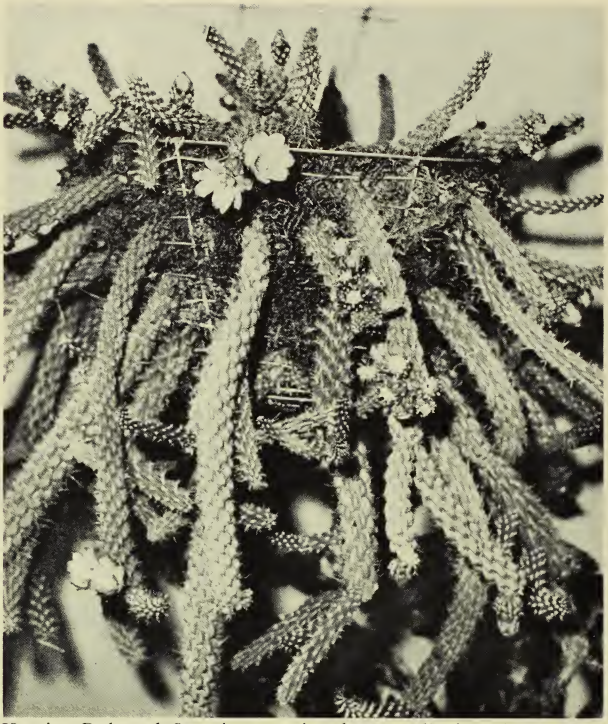
Hanging containers are exposed on all sides, causing them to dry out faster than in any other position. During warm weather, it may be necessary to water almost daily, and with tender non-succulents, twice daily or thrice daily. Try to keep your baskets out of strong wind or constant drafts. Most baskets also do better in filtered sunlight rather than direct sun, even if they are normally full-sun plants.

During one warm spell, when the temperature went into the 90's here in Chula Vista, our holly fern, *Cyrtomium falcatum,* partly wilted in spite of the fact that we had it shielded from the dry, warm wind, completely in the shade, and watered it almost hourly. We saved it only by taking it down and placing it in a bucket of water. Fuchsias and Begonias require the same intense watering when weather is very warm.

Watering must be sufficient to allow drainage (drip). If you are not getting drip or are not watering enough to allow drip, you have insufficient drainage or are not watering properly. This requires that you place baskets over a planter bed or arrange other suitable drainage so as not to stain patio floors or create a mess. Brick laid without mortar makes the best patio floor where basket drip is expected. Drip is important to prevent the dangerous build-up of salts from alkaline tap water and fertilizers.

Frequent watering, although necessary, leads to rapid leaching of the mineral content of the planting medium. This requires frequent applications of liquid fertilizer to keep the plants healthy and growing. If one specialized in just ferns, or fuchsias, or begonias, special liquid fertilizers may be purchased at nurseries which specialize in those plants. If one has a non-specialized basket collection, it is best to find an all-purpose liquid fertilizer. We have used fish-oil fertilizer, different brands, with good success. During the growing season, usually spring and summer, one should fertilize at least once a week. When plants are dormant, or semi-dormant, fertilizing should take place at least every three or four weeks. With the very tender plants which require watering twice daily, fertilizing twice weekly would not be too frequent.

Many cacti and succulents, because they have built-in water storage, may go several days to a week without water, during warmest weather, without adverse reaction, but if you want to keep them in top condition and growing, it pays to water frequently.



Hanging Basket of *Opuntia serpentina,* from a collection of 30 original basket plantings to be shown at the Men's Garden Club Show and at the Fair.

If you go away for a summer vacation, you should take down your tenderest plants, put them completely in the shade, and place them in buckets of water, if possible. If this is not possible, place a wet mulch of peat moss or oak-leaf mold around them.

Most cacti and succulents usually do not require such intensive care, but the ones which might suffer from a week or several weeks without water, should be taken down and placed on the ground, preferably in the shade. All baskets should be thoroughly watered or soaked after taking them down and placing them in the protected location.

To look their best, basket plants need constant grooming. Clip or pinch off dead leaves, exposed stems, flower stalks, etc. When a basket plant becomes woody, such as *Lotus berthelotii* (in one season), it is best to take cuttings and start over, or to discard the old plant entirely and buy new ones.

Most basket plants become completely root bound in one to two years. At least every two years, it is best to start with new plants or cuttings, or to take the old plants, remove most of the roots, and re-pot in fresh mix. Some of the cacti are exceptions to this rule, but the bigger the plant, the more food and water it will require if it is to stay healthy and growing.

Hangers

Do not make the mistake of trying to economize through the use of cheap wire to hang your baskets. All it takes is a broken wire to spill and break tender plants or to damage plants growing beneath the basket. Rust-resistant chains, from one to three feet in length, suspended from lag screw hooks make the best support. Chain costs from eight cents to more than one dollar per foot, depending upon the metal, size and quality.

WHY DON'T WE ?

Grow Perennials From Seed

by Helen Witham

Have we lost our sense of adventure? Are we letting ourselves be regimented by pony packs? Why not grow something from seed, I mean. This is a plea for growing some different perennials. While there is no use drooling over peonies here in coastal Southern California, there are a great many others besides delphiniums and Shastas that will do well here. How long has it been since you saw a geum or a francoa or a bleeding-heart? And did you *ever* see a physostegia?

Many other desirable plants, though not rare, are rarely grown. Let's not be frightened by the word perennial; we grow mums and daylilies and think nothing of it. The ones mentioned below share these satisfying qualities: long life, relative freedom from pests, usefulness for cutting, adaptability to our soils and water, and long blooming season. Several of them bloom through late summer into fall, a time when we need fresh colors. None require staking or hand-picking of spent blossoms.

Some seldom-seen perennials are easily grown from seed; others are more difficult, but nowhere nearly as tedious to raise as orchids or begonias. Some will bloom the first year, and they share with Shastas and mums the habit of rapid increase. If you should be lucky enough to find a plant, you can begin to propagate more plants from divisions or cuttings almost immediately. Those plants with very fine seeds, which are the most difficult to bring to garden size, obligingly furnish us with so many seeds that we can lose most of the seedlings and still have a start. A packet of feverfew, for example, contains a thousand seeds. We seldom want a whole thousand of these or anything else—we aren't Balboa Park. Sources for seed are given in parentheses; addresses listed at end.

GEUM—Let's start with this one that comes very easily from seed. (Park, Burpee) Geums are members of the rose family. Several of them are native of Canada and the United States, but those of most garden value are from South America and the Near East. The only one you are likely to find in seed packets is Geum *chiloense,* from Chile. The others are for rock garden specialists. This is a tough, hardy plant, with strong, yet graceful stems that require no staking. The first year you will have a neat mound of strawberry-like foliage, and people will think that you are planting your strawberries in odd places. But never mind, the next spring these mounds will send up two-foot branching stalks topped with 1½-inch blooms. The flowers, which look like very large, brightly colored double strawberry blossoms, make long-lasting arrangements. Colors range from yellow to scarlet, the most common being Lady Stratheden, golden yellow, and the glowing orange-scarlet Mrs. Bradshaw. These are plants for full sun, and you may expect bloom during summer into fall.

HUNNEMANNIA, Mexican Tulip Poppy—Here is one you won't have to wait two years to see in flower—just two months from seed will do it. From spring until Christmas you will have lovely yellow cups to decorate your garden or your house. Yes, this is a poppy that can be used indoors, since the blooms remain partially open. Its color, a singularly clear primrose yellow, goes with anything—is delicate with pink or white, dazzling with scarlet, glowing when used alone against dark evergreens. The clean foliage of silvery green resembles that of California poppies, but is not subject to mildew. Seeds are generally available on racks, or by mail order (Park). Sow where plants are wanted, as they resent transplanting. Although actually perennial they are better treated as annuals because they have a

Photo by Mackintosh

Santa Ana Cardinal Heuchera, with large flowers high above the leafy mound.

tendency to get leggy. Volunteers will appear here and there if you leave a few seed pods to ripen. Ordinary garden culture suits them well.

These poppies, although native to dry regions of Mexico, do not naturalize here; they are summer plants, germinating in spring, and requiring summer watering. Perhaps they are from a region of summer thunderstorms which keep them going. Muntz lists them with his wildflowers as "Occasional garden escapees, as at Oceana"—well, Oceana is a much cooler, foggier place than San Diego, which may account for that. So I repeat, plant seeds in spring, enjoy flowers for months on end. Here is an easy way to share and spread their beauty—when you pick off mature pods, drop them into a large paper bag, set it in a dry, warm place, and you will soon have many seeds to pass around.

DICENTRA—Has several useful garden forms, and their enriching names should be enough to earn them a place in anyone's garden: "Squirrel Corn," "Dutchman's Breeches," "Bleeding Heart." The first of these takes its name from its clusters of tiny tubers, the other two from shape of flowers. Probably "Bleeding Heart" is the only one you will be able to find here. The hearts are bright rose pink in the variety *D. spectabilis* and softer pink in *D. eximia.* Either one lights up a shady corner all summer long, with arching sprays of dangling hearts. The delicate appearing foliage is amazingly tough, and is so finely dissected and so irregular in shape that if some creature eats a leaf you don't notice it. A word of caution: It is a good idea to mark the spot where dicentra grows because it disappears completely in fall and you wouldn't want to dig out the root accidentally.

PHYSOSTEGIA (Pearce Seed Co.)—I have not seen any for years, but it is probably around somewhere, in some older garden. It is so hardy it *must* be around still. One of those obliging plants that can be passed along from one garden to another, it spreads apace, and once you have it, you have plants to spare. It is not, let me repeat, not for the tiny garden or restricted space. With room to spread and plenty of water it will send up six-foot spikes in midsummer and fall. Lilac or white blossoms are small individually but are crowded in tight rows on the tall, stiff spikes; a good accent plant and long-lasting indoors. The book says that it has been called Obedient Plant because the flowers will remain in whatever position you may turn them on the stem. Wish I had known this when I was growing it—sounds like fun, like seeing how far an owl can twist his neck before he has to flip the other way.

CORAL BELLS—Alumroot, Heuchera. Take your choice of names. Its botanical name is from the German Professor of Botany, Johann H. Heucher. The astringent drug derived from the root also bears his name. Happily, this plant is now generally available in gallon cans. Colors vary from white through shades of pink and salmon to crimson. The garden varieties have been selected from the wild Heuchera *sanguinea* of Arizona and Mexico. Dr. Lee Lenz of the Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden crossed this with the much larger white-flowered *H. maxima* from the Channel Islands, and produced a hybrid with large leaves and tall spikes of the familiar coral red color. This is now in the trade as Santa Ana Cardinal. Any of these Heucheras can be increased by taking cuttings or side branches which root readily in moist sand. I took cuttings from Santa Ana Cardinal in December; now in April it has two flower spikes.

DIANTHUS (Burpee; Park; seed racks)—Pinks, pinks, pinks! Carnations, Spice Pinks, Cottage Pinks, Sweet William, Sweet Wivelsfield, Maiden Pinks, Clove Pinks, the very names show that they have been known and loved for a long time. In addition to the many species available as plants, there are dozens in the seed catalogues. Pinks come in all sizes and shapes, from half-inch blooms on flat cushions to huge florist type carnations—double,

Photo by Mackintosh

Pink clouds of Dianthus, held upright on sturdy stems.

single, fringed, striped, spotted; all colors except blue, and some of the purples are approaching even that. These are large seeds, that anyone can try with reasonable expectation of success. Once you have a plant or two you can increase your stock by division or slips. My aunt used to have rows of slips under jelly glasses in filtered shade right in the garden. While the large ones take a good deal of time to disbud, stake, or tie, there are many species that require none of these attentions. The single Spice Pinks and other smaller ones stand by themselves without staking. After weeks of fragrant bloom, the cushiony plants may be sheared at the top of the foliage, and in a few days the cut stems will disappear as new leaves push a bit higher. There ought to be a specialist in pinks. Does anyone qualify? Think of the fun you could have—all the people who grow one or another kind would ask you the names of them and you could be an "expert." There are experts on ants and aphids and things like that, but pinks smell a lot better.

So how about searching out and growing an unusual plant, or starting your own from seeds? You probably will have the only one on the block; you might even have the only one in town! And what would that make you? Well, somebody has to be way out there.

Mail order sources:
Geo. W. Park Seed Co.
Greenwood, South Carolina 29647
W. Atlee Burpee Co.
Riverside, Calif. 92502
Pearce Seed Co.
Moorestown, New Jersey 08057

JOYS AND PROBLEMS OF A SMALL APARTMENT GARDEN

by Martha H. Rosenberg

When I mentioned my "garden," my friends would smile. They were too kind to laugh. This was seven years ago.

My husband and I came to San Diego from the Middle West, and we deliberately chose San Diego as the place we would like to make our permanent home. We decided to approach our new life leisurely, and all in good time we would arrange things as we really wanted them. This included gardening even though we were confirmed apartment dwellers.

We found a small "temporary" apartment overlooking Balboa Park, where we stayed for three years. This was a very fortunate location and one which has a definite bearing on events to follow. The view of the Park from our balcony was "a thing of beauty and a joy forever." On long walks in the Park I was simply overwhelmed by the strange and beautiful shrubs, trees and flowers. It wasn't long before my fingers fairly 'itched' to grow something at home, though this presented certain problems. We had a front corner apartment with a small balcony which was topped with a flower box more or less filled with the usual assortment of 'planter' plants, all of them in a state of complete depression. The plants were unfamiliar to me and I had no idea what was wrong with them. The apartment owner said I might do anything I liked with the planter boxes, so I started out to replant them, which caused my friends to smile.

I had the great good sense to join the San Diego Floral Association and the Flower Arrangement Classes. I asked all sorts of foolish questions of the members, privately, and at the meetings. Every time I saw a flower or shrub that took my fancy, I would ask if it would grow in my flower box. And more often than not, I would try it regardless of advice. In the three years we lived in that apartment, I must have gone all the way from Azalea to Zinnia and missed very few plants between. Unfortunately, I wasn't very successful with any of them. The balcony which faced East had only an hour or two of early morning sun. So my favorite annuals were out of the question. In southern Ohio, I could grow magnificent Marigolds, Zinnias, Petunias and the like with no trouble beyond putting the seeds in the ground and thinning the young plants, with occasional watering in the dry spells. Now, I was confronted with advice about fertilizing, sterilizing the soil for something called nematodes or fungi, and spraying for pests above the ground. Some of the seeds I planted didn't germinate at all, some grew weak and leggy, and others rotted off at the soil line. A few lived to bloom once.

Of course, what the planters really needed was a thorough renovating and new soil. But we were in a "temporary" apartment and didn't want to go to that expense when we might move at any moment. Finally, one of my Floral Association friends suggested succulents and offered to supply me with cuttings and plants from her own garden. I became fascinated by all the different colors, forms and textures of this wonderful family of plants and I filled my planter boxes. For the first time I had the warm, sweet feeling of success.

I was well on my way to a fairly respectable looking planter—which is a more modern term than flower box—when suddenly we found the apartment for which we had been looking. Actually, it is the lower half of a duplex in an older section of Mission Hills, with a beautiful view of the Bay and enough planting area to keep me interested and occupied. In the four years we have been here I have had some spectacular surprises, enough success to keep me satisfied and a few failures to challenge me. And I ask you what more can any truly dedicated gardener want?

Shall I take you back to the Fall when we first moved? The duplex is a part of a three part compound, and each duplex tenant is provided with a private patio. Our entrance from the street was through a white gate in a brick wall. When we moved in, our 24′ x 10′ patio had a large Bird-of-Paradise in one corner and a Hydrangea in the other. On the side against our apartment wall was a small bed with an Angel Wing Begonia flanked by two rather good looking ferns. The floor of the patio was paved with pinkish flagstones wall to wall.

We considered planting everything in pots or redwood tubs. But to plant the variety of things I wanted to try would have entailed too many pots. I wasn't too concerned yet with beauty of design but I didn't want people to feel as though they had stepped into a commercial nursery. We finally hit upon a better idea. We had built good, solid 5′ x 18″ x 14″ redwood planters divided into three equal sections to make it easier to move or exchange plants. Also the plants there could have different watering schedules. These planters were placed along either side of the patio wall. There was just enough room in the center of the patio for traffic and a few wicker chairs and a table.

On the opposite side of the apartment, overlooking the Bay, is a balcony, large enough to sit on, and we wanted some plants there. We decided on a flower box suspended outside the railing at floor height so it wouldn't interfere with our view. On the balcony, we plant sun-loving plants because we had already discovered that our patio didn't get even a half day of sunlight. The landlord became so fascinated by all our plans and experiments that he allotted us a space at one end of the driveway area and provided a three-tiered plant bench.

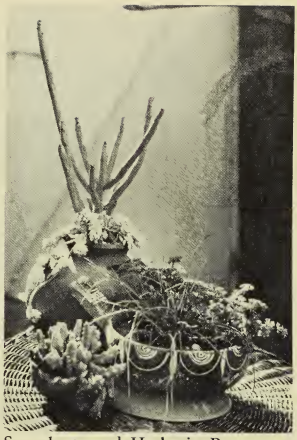
I have gradually shed most of my Midwestern ideas of gardening and am becoming a "California Gardener." It wasn't easy and took longer than it needed but I had to try to do it my way first. The first year I planted Marguerites, Petunias, Carnations and Geraniums, even though I knew it

was shady most of the day. Actually, they all bloomed beautifully after a very slow start. But toward the end of the summer they were all so tall and leggy they weren't very attractive. The flower box was planted with Marguerites and Carnations that made a beautiful mass of blooms that filled the box and tumbled over the edge. On the three-tiered bench I have my rose garden in 12″ Mexican pots. All planters, boxes and pots are filled with a good planter mix. Therefore, we don't have to worry about the friability of the soil, the drainage, or even weeds, but we have to be careful that the mix never becomes dry—so the watering schedule is followed religiously.

Since I have become a California Gardener, you, my Midwest cousins, wouldn't believe the variety of plants I have in planter boxes in a patio, one flower box and tiered bench of potted roses. I brought a good selection of my favorite succulents with me and planted them in squatty Mexican strawberry jars on top of the patio wall and on the steps leading to the front door. Now my garden and I are on the friendliest terms. I bow to her idiosyncrasies and she occasionally lets me get away with something—like growing the most beautiful Autumnal Fuchsias I have seen anywhere, on top of a driveway post exposed to the full sun and wind all the year around. For my part I have agreed to grow only shade plants in the patio.

So, now this brings things to the present, and maybe you would like to know what I am growing in my garden. In the long redwood boxes in the patio I have permanent background plantings of four Camellias, three Fuchsias, two Azaleas, one miniature Gardenia and a Heather, and even an interesting Manzanita root. I planted wild Cyclamen with the Camellias. These boxes are in the shadiest, coolest corner of all. In front of the other background plants I sink pots of Cyclamen and Primroses, Snow Drops and Freesias.

After blooming is over, these pots are pulled out and pots of Tuberous Begonias and Feverfew are put in the same holes. Pots are not all changed at the same time because some plants bloom longer than others and some mature later, even among the same varieties. I always have a variety of blooming plants and fresh bright color in my patio. When the potted plants have finished blooming, they are retired to a rest place under the shrubbery, and the bulbs to the garage. Some of the Cyclamen are four years



Succulents and Herbs in Pottery on Balcony.

old, some of the Tuberous Begonias are starting their third year. I have raised some Cyclamen and some Primroses from seed. In the small bed with the original ferns and Angel Wing begonia I planted a 'Bromeliad Tree' using a very large Manzanita branch and wiring Billbergia roots wrapped in spaghnum moss in the notches of the branches. When the 'tree' blooms in February, it is most attractive espaliered against the apartment wall.

At this particular time, the balcony flower box is filled with fancy-leaved and scented Geraniums. These are attractive and interesting in all seasons. On a warm evening it is great to sit quietly on the balcony and play with a few leaves of the lemon, apple and nutmeg Geraniums and 'enjoy' their fragrance. In Winter it's only a step away and I can toss a couple of Rose Geranium leaves into the applesauce. However, I really like the Marguerites in the flower box better than the Geraniums.

Looking from the balcony out over the driveway area you can see my tiered rose garden. I have eight Floribunda roses and one miniature rose tree (a Blue Ribbon winner in last year's Rose Show), all in 12-inch Mexican clay pots. At the foot of the tiered shelves is a small redwood planter, 36″ x 10″ x 9″, and in this is planted eight miniature roses. They are colorful and pretty healthy most of the time, and we like them there. In pots, that can be easily shifted around the patio or the driveway area, there are two dwarf Calla Lilies, a hybrid Clivia, a Campanula that is a monstrous ball of white when in bloom, a few choice succulents that I like to keep by themselves as a collection; also anything new that has taken my fancy or perhaps something a friend has given me.

Now my friends no longer smile when I mention my garden. They compliment me and even on rare occasions, ask my advice. In return, I can give them slips and cuttings and plants. And isn't that one of the first pleasures of gardening?

The plants and I have all come a long way in seven years, and it has been fun.

RAINFORD

Continued from Page 7

wet moss with stems removed in order that many blooms might be studied and compared easily. Our decorative attention and skills were given to backgrounds and plant arrangements. (It is natural to understand that the British methods were used by our Association as our Founder President, Alfred D. Robinson, was a Britisher.)

While any flower arranger or grower certainly enjoys seeing a prize ribbon beside his exhibit, the general trend and spirit of exhibiting for the pure pleasure of doing so and of giving pleasure to others — that trend so happily on the increase — is certainly a delightful advance and one to be highly commended.

The only discouraging trend just now is the extensive use of artificial plant material, really just a lazy person's trick. In a climate where every day of the year a fresh flower or foliage can be brought in from the garden we are disgracing our city when we use artificial blooms to such an extent. A few are helpful: too many, unfortunate.

HEIGH-HO

Come to the Fair

Get your posies entered for prizes now. They must be entered before June 1st. Write or call the Fairgrounds office for Entry forms.

Four new displays are planned for this year: 1. Bonsai. 2. Platycerium, 16 varieties. 3. Collector's Display (25 species of each—house plants; grafts; miniature or dwarf plants) and 4. Iris. Cut flowers and arrangements.

Cut bloom entries are changed every day to maintain a fresh, fragrant atmosphere.

Roland Hoyt* Recommends

AUSTRALIAN TEA-TREE

Not a little credit is due the management in Balboa Park for singling out and preserving from the original planting, the specimen of this species near the new Timken Gallery. It stands alone at the curb where El Prado breaks into the Plaza and will be easily recognized. Here one will see and hopefully be impressed with the picturesque quality that develops with age in this Bohemian species. There are other plantings of like age in the park, but usually back in shrubbery or otherwise obscure as individuals so that the unusual character cannot be readily recognized.

Here is a species (*Leptospermum laevigatum*) a tree-shrub, one of the earliest of the foreign introductions in California and which has grown up, so to speak, with our San Diego. There are comparatively few to be seen about, as resulting from so many years of planting, and the craft-knowledge to be gained is the inability of the plant to take heavy soils, or moisture anywhere without drainage. Even with this vital factor in hand, too much moisture will take its toll of a planting so that here and there these individuals stand out and attest our late understanding of its wants. Sand is its delight and well-being.

A rugged individual otherwise, this shrub takes high heat inland or cold winds off the ocean, salt breezes that vitiate and all the punishment a storm there can inflict. The plant will be called ungainly in the early stages of growth. Age, as usual, brings out whatever of implanted quality in an individual that exists, and finally this plant is called picturesque. Look at this one on the plaza and see the distinction coming on . . . the tortuous-textured, twisting trunk a study in abstraction, weirdly beautiful for those who will see . . . unreal, visionary. The hairy-stringy, exfoliating bark is an additive in interest, not so much a source of litter.

*Fellow ASLA, author of *Ornamental Plants for Subtropical Regions.*

This shrub will take moderate pruning, but in the nature of a thinning out and direction of growth; always too, with the idea of getting the primary stems up in the air the normal 15′ or to 30′ in a proper spot . . . this to a flat, more or less umbrageous top. Do not cut a stem back to a stump; remove altogether if unwanted, since new growth usually fails to come forth. Try it as a free-standing espalier against a hot wall. The white flowers of April-May will blanket the broad, slate-green head in a contrasting indication that white, after all, may be considered a color . . . unfading, the purest and most enduring. There are no pests enterprising enough to tackle these tough leaves and no disease to penetrate. It takes any abuse other than that noted.

Pictured also here by Alfred Hottes is *Leptospermum scoparium* in two forms, a species with like wants culturally, but with brilliant red coloring in the flowers. A number of years past, Dr. Walter E. Lammerts did some hybridizing with resulting strains of unusual merit for dry gardening. There are many free-blooming varieties here, single flowers to fully double in pinks to red and, fortunately, many dwarfs for the smaller place. These are almost always available in nurseries. An important point here, to recognize first and then to remember as the plant comes along, is that the young plant wants moisture . . . gradually diminishing until a reasonable, then an almost total dryness has been reached. Many failures result from too suddenly breaking-in.

ERRATA

This is to correct the article on *Parkinsonia* as it appeared in the April-May issue. The word "Snow" should be read as "Sown." This term relates to the constant, age-long migrations north through the Arabian deserts . . .

those tribes being pushed out of the desirable, watered mountains of the south, the stronger behind surging, elbowing, and shouldering on the gradually weakening ones. These waves ultimately made contact and slowly merged with the agricultural north. It was the borderline area that was and still may be known there as the Sown or cultivable land. This southern expanse of wilderness in age-long time, it is claimed, produced many of the prophets of theology, and what may be . . . *Parkinsonia* as we know it today.

R.S.H.

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A Book In The Hand

by Alice Mary Greer

The Picture Book of Annuals: Arno and Irene Mehrling: Drawings by Emma Crafts Earley; Hearthside Press, 1966. 289 pages; $6.95

We grow annuals—so claim the Mehrlings, because they are a tremendously important group of plants, since even the most pessimistic gardener can count on annuals to bloom quickly. But annuals have many other virtues. They offer variety and interest; are easy of cultivation; permit economy; give maximum bloom and quantities of cut flowers. Annuals solve the problem of bare spots; permit easy changes in planting schemes; are suitable for the small garden and pot plants. These plants can be produced in a hurry; and are adaptable in the landscape plan. The authors treat annuals from "A" Abronia to "Z" Zinnias in a dictionary arrangement. The text is fuller and a little more readable than the average catalog, however.

Part II of the text gives useful facts and directions for growing annuals from seed and from started plants. Many techniques and tricks of the trade are demonstrated. Line drawings, charts and illustrations are helpful to the novice grower, acquainting him with good garden practices, including growing annuals under fluorescent lights. A monthly schedule of things to do is included, but this is not a Southern California schedule.

Part III of the text discusses landscape design with annuals as the center of interest and the use of annuals in the problem garden. Container gardens, using annuals, is offered. Annual vines and climbers, annuals for cutting, annuals as house plants—each is taken up, as the answer to having continuous color with blooming plants.

Altogether, this is a very inclusive and comprehensive text, written by a smooth-running husband and wife team. He is an ex-Cornell professor and commercial grower—she is a member of the Home Economics Department at Cornell.

Guest Reviewer—
Mrs. Cleoves Hardin, *President* San Diego Bromeliad Society

Bromeliads in Color and their Culture: Victoria Padilla. The Bromeliad Society, Inc., Los Angeles, California, 1966. 125 pages. $5.95

The very best of all the Bromeliad Society Bulletins from 1951 to date, have been compiled by the editor into one easy-to-read and beautifully illustrated book. This book is for the amateur as well as the experienced grower. Although it has only 125 pages, there are articles from all over the world. The contributors are not limited to our locality though the first Bromeliad Society (and the one publishing this book) is located in Los Angeles. Because most Bromeliads are grown under cover of some sort, one can utilize the experience of contributors from England, France or Australia. Among the contributors are some of the largest hybridizers in the country as well as renowned collectors.

Under the section titled Background, one learns the sub-families and genera; also family characteristics. One can forget both time and place while reading the fascinating but true descriptions of these fantastic plants. The section Varieties will be used over and over for reference in building a collection or identifying plants already accumulated.

The section on Culture gives the reader a vast amount of information for growing the plants under diverse conditions. The Propagation section will answer many questions that have been unanswered for a long time, and will set the reader's mind at rest about some very controversial subjects.

In the Display section, you will find many ideas for using Bromeliads—the "Tree idea;" the "Mobile" or planting Bromeliads in the rock garden. The reader is in for surprises here for there is no more versatile plant to be found than the Bromeliad. This is one of the finest, most complete publications by any Society that I have had the pleasure to read.

Calendar of Care

Down-to-Earth Gardening for June & July

by Dick Hull, Plantsman

As you sow, so shall you reap; and thus it is in these times in the garden. Don't be the one who, with much pleasure, admires the neighbor's or friend's landscape. Instead, YOU be the one who is admired and asked, "How do you do it?"

Now that we are well into spring and summer is arriving, there is no time to lose to do this year the things we planned to do last year.

The frost threat is gone and the tender seeds and plants can be planted. For those of us who always enjoy the fresh "backyard garden" vegetables, let's be planting beans (pole or bush), cucumbers, watermelons, muskmelons, squash, tomatoes, lettuce, beets, and carrots. By the way, let's not forget the radishes. Radishes like beets, carrots, and lettuce should be planted every three to five weeks. In doing so you can keep a new crop of "young and tenders" coming to the table all summer.

Camellias and azaleas have well finished their blooming, and now they should be given an acid fertilizer and kept well watered. If your camellia plants, these past rainy months, have been sitting in water two or three days at a time, set them higher in the ground or relocate them elsewhere. Ample moisture but good drainage is a good secret for their success.

Dahlias that were planted the past month should be up and vigorously putting their fourth leaf upward. To produce the good bushy plants with abundance of flowers, pinch out the growing tip and stake the plants now. Mowing lawns now takes on a different look toward the cutting height. Bermuda and Hybrid Bermudas should be mowed at approximately ½ inch while the Bents, Fescues, and Blue Grasses should be raised to 1½ inch. It is far better to cut more often and take some off each time, than to let the lawn reach an excessive height, and take a heavy cut. The best time to mow is when the lawns reach 1 inch above your normal cutting height. There is no finer frame for the picture of the landscape than a well-cared for lawn.

Jacaranda trees are now opening their first blossoms and with them come our pest the aphid. Care and attention should be taken to rid them of the aphids or a loss of bloom will occur in less than a week.

You will find that the new wonder insecticides, classed as systemic, are available on the market. These can be applied either in a liquid form and sprayed on the foliage, or cultivated into the ground much the same as fertilizer, and watered in. The working principle of the systemic insecticides is that the poison is carried into the plant's structure by the root system. Pests which attack any part of the plant are poisoned before their damage can be done, while formerly we sprayed after their harm had been discovered, which was often too late. Use systemics cautiously and read and follow all directions carefully for some plants cannot accept them. Use of systematic insecticides insures lasting results for approximately six or eight weeks. Although they are slightly more expensive, they are more thorough and you save on the time used in weekly sprayings. Systemic insecticides should not be used on food crops for human or animal consumption.

For those of us who have those pots of Cymbidium Orchids on the patio, let's not forget them now that they are completing their blooming period. Most gardening authorities feel that it is best not to feed your orchids until you can reasonably grow them without fertilizer. However, let's not overdo this. New growth is starting and a good balanced liquid or pellet fertilizer will help to develop and shape the coming year's spikes. Fertilizer should be slightly higher in nitrogen at this time of the year, and lowered toward late summer, but increasing the phosphate at that time.

The growing season is on, so let's get that good healthy suntan in the garden, rather than altogether at the beach or poolside.

A thought to remember is that when you give of money to a friend you give not something that is yours; but when you give in friendship a blossom you have grown, you give of yourself.

Dahlias

by Larry Sisk
San Diego County Dahlia Society

Dahlias planted early are coming into bloom now, and the show of color will increase until the peak blooming season is reached about mid-August to the first of September.

Proper care will enable the plants to continue blooming through October. That proper care is simple: Regular watering, occasional feeding, control of insects and mildew, and removal of spent flowers.

Although the need is not as great along the coast as in inland areas, mulching of the dahlia patch will contribute to the plants' health. Mulch protects the feeder roots which are near the surface when blooming starts, and it helps conserve moisture in the soil as well as to keep down weeds.

Redwood bark, shavings, dried grass cuttings, peatmoss and straw are some of the materials recommended for dahlias; any of the materials used to mulch rose beds or other garden areas are also fine for dahlias. Spread the mulch thick enough to cover the ground 20 to 30 inches around the plants; the thicker the better to maintain moisture — within reason, of course.

There is another easily-obtained mulch material which some experienced dahlia growers use. It's garden soil. While the plants are growing, the gardener cultivates after each watering, keeping the soil throughout the garden in a very loose condition. When the plants start showing color, marking the time for cultivation to stop, the gardener then draws the loose soil to the plants until it forms a protective mound in the root areas around all the plants. The soil mulch still can be cultivated lightly after watering, to keep the root areas aereated.

Soil mulch is not limited to dahlia plants; it's good in all kinds of gardens.

Moisture and its conservation are important in all gardens also during the growing months of June and July. Less water is required when it is permitted to soak deeply and is applied less frequently. Sprinkling once over lightly every day will make the plants look fresh, perhaps, but it will bring the roots to the surface too quickly and result in a loss of bloom potential.

In most soils of this area, deep watering once a week is sufficient. But, each gardener should adopt a system to suit his needs: water when the top two inches of the earth is dry. When plants wilt in hot weather, more than likely it is after a watering, and not a sign that they need more. A fine spray to cool the air is better to combat wilting than to load the soil with more water.

Dahlias thrive on heat, but the heat also should be kept in mind when cutting the blooms, in addition to the mulching and watering. Flowers removed from plants during warm parts of the day wilt quickly. Cutting early in the morning or, preferably, at dusk will help keep the blooms in good condition three to five days.

Take a pail of water to the plant, cut above the leaves closest to the main stalk, remove the lower foliage, and plunge the stems into air-temperature water. Staging the cut flowers in the water overnight and before arranging or placing on display is recommended.

Gardeners who grow dahlias for color in the yard should remember to remove blooms as they fade or shatter; cut the faded flowers with the same care, down to the last set of leaves where the next stems will appear to provide continuing color.

To have the best blooms, disbudding and disbranching should be continued for the medium and large varieties. For more flowers regardless of size, just let the plants grow and produce.

For exhibition, and to obtain maximum size, the large varieties should be restricted to four canes—or even three. Medium varieties (six to eight inches) develop best when held to six to eight flower-bearing canes at a time. On each variety only one bud of the three at the tip of each cane should be permitted to grow. Rub out the two side buds on each cane as soon as possible.

To have a close look at the way exhibition dahlias should appear, don't miss the dahlia section at the county fair flower show. And for the best large, medium, small and novel varieties, plan now to visit one of the several dahlia shows in Southern California.

San Diego's show will be in the Balboa Park Conference Building, Saturday and Sunday, August 6 and 7.

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Roses

by John G. Farleigh

San Diego Rose Society

The first flush of bloom is gone from the rose garden — and what a magnificent display of color it was this year! Whether you participated in the local flower show, or just provided your friends and neighbors with your own personal rose show, it's time now to give the roses some well deserved attention.

A regular feeding and spraying program should have already been established and should be faithfully followed until next October. A minimum diet will include a half cup of dry rose food around the root zone of each bush after it completes a blooming cycle. A liquid feeding or foliar feeding in between these meals assures that food is available for the plant.

The bumper crop of aphids is a constant reminder of the importance of a weekly spray program. Any good general purpose spray will take care of minor problems. During warm weather we like Isotox for insects and Acti-Dione PM for mildew. The two are compatible, so that you can mix them together in the same spray solution if your time is limited.

While we are on the subject of sprays, there are three safety precautions that must be followed: (1) Always keep poisons out of the reach of children—preferably locked up. (2) Water your roses thoroughly before spraying, or foliar feeding. They can be damaged by too rapid absorption of either. (3) Read and heed the directions on the labels.

For protection from our dry summer and fall, the rose garden should be protected by a good mulch. Let's spend the next few minutes discussing the merits of mulching. Properly applied, a mulch will keep the rose bed from drying out rapidly, protects the surface feeder roots from the hot sunshine and may serve as a beneficial soil amendment. If you are cost conscious, it can save you time and water. The purchase price can be small, modest or expensive depending on the size of the garden and the material used.

Our present preference for mulch material is bean straw. This is the vines and pods left over from the lima bean harvest. It is obtained from a neighborhood nursery in bales (like alfalfa hay) and scattered over the rose bed to a depth of about four inches. One bale covers approximately 120 square feet. This makes a neat appearing rose bed and has other desirable properties not as visible. It is coarse in texture so it doesn't pack down as other organic materials. This allows water and food to flow down to the soil and a controlled amount of air to circulate over the soil. It breaks down into humus rather rapidly, by December only the coarser stems remain. These are raked up after the winter pruning. The earth worms are very fond of bean straw, and we believe they have a beneficial effect on the soil. Like many other old farmers we associate earth worms with good rich soil. In all candidness, bean straw has one drawback. It clings like a leech to the mulch spreader or anyone else who comes in contact with it. The deliverymen dislike it with a fervor. It can be purchased in a pulverized form which is easier to handle and only slightly more expensive.

Another popular mulch in this area is wood shavings. This is probably the least expensive. They can be purchased by the bag or bale at nurseries or by the truck load at some of the lumber yards. When spread generously over the rose bed and watered regularly they do a good job of keeping moisture in and weeds out. You can get into some rather academic discussions with the shaving mulchers over the best type of shavings to use. Fir and pine shavings, we are told, break down faster than redwood, thereby enriching the soil. In the process, they are lost as a mulch. A redwood mulch, once applied, will last for years and in the opinion of some experts it contains an ingredient that discourages red spiders and other rose pests.

Wood shavings have a tendency to remove some of the nitrogen from the soil in the process of breaking down into compost. To compensate for this a food high in nitrogen content should be used for the initial feeding.

Some gardeners swear by steer manure — their neighbors have been known to just swear. Depending on the professional gardeners' persuasion, manure should be avoided entirely or applied generously. We take a middle course which agrees that manure is a good soil amendment. We spread some around each rose bush before applying the bean straw. As a total mulch, it tends to pack down making watering and feeding difficult.

There are some home gardeners who use grass clippings and leaves. These will perform the basic function of a mulch, but they are notorious for harboring rust and other undesirable garden pests. When time and space permits grass clippings and other garden residue should be thoroughly composted and screened before being used as a mulch or soil amendment.

The proponents of non-organic mulches have some good selling points. The American Rose Society test garden at Whittier, Calif. uses lava ash as a mulch with good results. It is very porous and allows water and fertilizer to percolate freely down to the roots. It facilitates keeping the garden clean. Leaves and petals can be raked

(Continued on Page 25)

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Bromeliads - Neoregelias

by Mrs. Cleoves Hardin
President, San Diego Bromeliad Society

Neoregelias — Pandora's paint box. In this genera as in no other, one will find color unbelievable. From the many species to the numerous hybrids, you can wish for a color and find it. All Neoregelias are the cushion type—that is, they bloom in the cup usually at the very top of the bracteal leaves, but some of them are down within the water level.

For the beginner and even the serious collector, this is the group to keep in mind if you want a show-off plant. Even when not in actual bloom, the bracteal leaves on an adult plant are breathtaking. Although many of them can be grown in the shade, for the most part they take as much bright light as can be given without direct sun exposure.

Neoregelias are natives of Brazil with a few found in Colombia and Peru. They are mostly plants to be grown low so that you look down into the rosette. Because of their weight and capacity to hold water, they are the forest floor dwellers. That probably accounts for the fact that they were among the first introduced to Europe by the collectors.

In the species we find a group of hard finish leaves, wicked spines and fantastic growth pattern in the offsets.

N. *cruenta* is a large-growing firm-leaved rosette that will measure better than 24 inches high and at least that far across from one red fingernail to the other. Although it is a green-leaved variety, its importance should not be overlooked as a corner filler. It has blue flowers that last over a long period of time and can tolerate any condition—sun, shade, or neglect, anything except drouth.

N. *eleutheropetela* is a large growing spiney plant that fascinates anyone who comes in contact with it, especially at offset time. It is one you might think of as belonging in the rock garden. Its leaves are long and narrow with spines going both ways. The center turns a brilliant rose that stays in color for most of a year with blue flowers peeping from the center. The offsets come from the side of the plant close to the roots and look as if they have been braided. When the plant has finished flowering, put it in a basket or wall pocket and listen for the comments when it is noticed. There is also a variegated one with a red stripe down the center of the leaf.

To go from the giants to the lilliputs, consider N. *ampullacea*. It is the smallest in the genera. Another feature not so common among Neoregelias is the fact that this one is stoloniferus. It would be a good basket or plaque subject as it creeps along quite readily. It is only an inch or so across and seldom over 6 inches tall. It is tubular in form and spotted maroon on a light green background.

N. *zonatus* is very much like the above except it is larger and does not creep. Another similar one, except for the shape, is N. *tristis*. Its leaves are set in a quadrangle arrangement rather than a tubular rosette. It requires a lot of bright light to bring out the maroon spots.

N. *marmorata* is a beauty more commonly found in the nurseries. It is a blotched red on dark green with very bright red fingernails. Its sister hybrid — called N. *marmorata, French hybrid* is a very bright yellow green when grown in full light and can almost be seen through, the red spots are so transparent.

N. *spectabilis* is very much like the above, except for being barred instead of spotted and with lots of white scurf underneath the leaves. All of these have light blue flowers.

N. *carolinae* is one of the most beautiful soft green leaved rosettes imaginable. The center turns a brilliant red before blooming and stays that way for many months. N. *carolinae Marechalii* is very much like the above except the center is more bronze and the leaves tend to spot with the same color. N. *carolinae tricolor* is a spectacular rainbow of pink, cream and green. Add a fiery rose center with blue flowers and you have the ultimate in beauty.

From our own famous hybridizer, Ed Hummel, comes plants that defy description. Take names like Fairy Paint, Flash, Oh No, and Pink Polka Dot, let your imagination run riot with color and you can picture just a few of his introductions.

Neoregelias are easy enough to care for. They are very robust plants and will take kindly to fertilizing. Use one half strength of that amount which is recommended by the manufacturer in the cup about once or twice a month. Leave the mixture in the cup for about 48 hours, then wash out so that no salts accumulate on the leaves.

Neoregelias offset regularly and are easily separated. One important thing to remember in growing them is a good loose potting mixture, so there will be good drainage—fir bark, redwood bark or any of the orchid mixes would be good.

When looking over this plant to purchase, always keep in mind a low spot perhaps combined with a log or piece of driftwood that will make a show piece of unexcelled beauty to be admired and envied by all.

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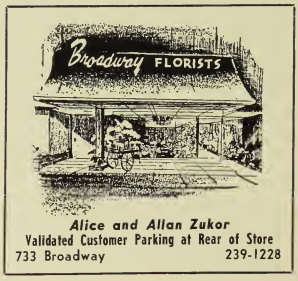

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Orchids

by Byron H. Geer

San Diego County Orchid Society

Those Orchid growers who confine themselves only to the Cymbidiums are missing a great part of the fun in growing. With a few exceptions their seasonal crop of bloom is past and they have nothing to look forward to until next winter. Nothing, that is, except giving the Cymbidiums the attention that they will demand in the critical months ahead. It has been noted in this column many times before that the care given these plants during the summer months determines to a great degree the extent and quality of next season's flower crop, but there always seems to be a few people who don't get the message. It may be an old, tired cliche to CALIFORNIA GARDEN readers, but I can't emphasize too strongly that you will get out of your Cymbidium Orchids (or any other Orchids, for that matter) only what you put into them. And the time for lavish applications of TLC is *now*. They are putting out new growths and it is absolutely essential that these growths be ripened and fattened properly. To accomplish this, only a few basic rules will suffice:

1) The repotting that should have been done in January can't wait any longer. Plants that are growing out to the edge of the containers don't allow room for the development of fat new bulbs, much less a thick, sturdy mass of roots. I don't know just where this nonsense about Cymbidiums liking to be pot-bound originated, but nonsense it is. I've seen too many pot-bound plants struggling to get new roots out into the soggy mess at their bases to be sympathetic with this viewpoint. And even worse, from the plant's attitude, is the matter of stale, sour, compacted, broken-down compost. If you are looking for a good root system, and it's axiomatic that a healthy root growth precedes a healthy top growth, look first to the state of the potting medium. It should be light, friable, slow in breaking down and moisture retentive but not sopping wet. This you are not likely to get in compost over three years old. You don't have to take my word for this, you know. Just knock a questionable Cymbidium out of its pot and see for yourself what the roots look like. If you are satisfied with their appearance, tap it back into the pot and go on your merry way—hopefully.

2) More nonsense is this bit about Cymbidiums being shade plants. Beautiful emerald green foliage is lovely to look at, and if you are growing for foliage keep it a rich dark green. If, on the other hand, you would like to see good flower production, move your plants out into more light and let the leaves lighten up to the color of an unripe banana. At least 50 per cent light is the norm, and as much more as they can take without sunburning. When the leaves start to turn yellow along the arch, it is time to retrench and shade a little more.

3) There are all kinds of fertilizers on the market today. Some are better than others, of course, but *anything* is better than *nothing*. Your summer food should be balanced, two or three to one Nitrogen-Phosphorous ratio. Liquid fish is excellent for the small grower, easy to use and readily available to the plant. I prefer organics since they contain minute quantities of the trace elements which the chemicals customarily lack. It is my belief, not necessarily shared by other growers, that the long term use exclusively of such chemical fertilizers can lead to serious trouble through plant hunger. Use them if you will (and I do) but supplement or alternate with periodic feedings of an organic. A mild feeding each week will do a great deal more for you and the plant than a heavy dose once a month.

4) And the most critical point of all during the hot summer months is the matter of water. If you are following 1) and 2) above, you absolutely *cannot* overwater. Cymbidiums must never, but never, be dry to the dehydration point. True, they don't want wet feet and good drainage is essential, but a good compost and good drainage combined make it impossible for the pots to retain excess moisture.

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Shriveled bulbs and dry, leathery leaves are a danger sign and indicate one of two things. Either you are not watering enough, or your compost is broken down and you are drowning your roots. Again, use the tap-it-out-of-the-pot technique and find out what the problem might be.

These four guidelines should pay off in good growth and prolific blossom next year. But, don't expect every plant to bloom every season. Even the best of the growers can't do this.

The Cattleya and Species fan has lots to look forward to now, since much of the best blooming season is during the summer months. There are guidelines to be followed here, too, and it might not be surprising to know that they are identical to the four points listed above, with one addition. Whereas the Cymbidiums do not suffer particularly from dry air as long as the compost is moist, the Cattleyas and their allied genera are most intolerant. Atmospheric humidity around the plants is very important and cannot be overlooked. Usually greenhouse conditions are best, but there are cases in which a greenhouse simply is not available. If this is so, humidity must be provided in some other way. Mist spraying of the foliage may be the answer, or perhaps a temporary small 'greenhouse' consisting of an enclosure made from a bell jar or plastic bag. Orchid growers are inveterate 'Rube Goldbergs' anyway, and we are liable to improvise all sorts of oddball gadgets in an effort to keep our plants happy. The important thing, to my way of thinking anyway, is the result. Who cares how far out an idea might be so long as the plant grows stronger and blooms more freely? Growing techniques are flexible; we should be too. The story of Horticulture is one long saga of experimentation—trial and error—and *learning* from the error. The only crime is in making the same mistake twice.

ROSES *(Continued from Page 22)*

up without disturbing the mulch. Once applied it will last indefinitely.

Pea size gravel about one inch deep over the soil has been recommended as a mulch. It retains less water than the organic material so that nearly all the water is transmitted to the soil and very little is lost through evaporation.

Much more can be said for mulching. We hope you have been convinced that a good mulch is important. You can be watering and weeding less and have more time to enjoy your rose garden.

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Camellias

by Ray Greer

President, San Diego Camellia Society

As the "Ho-Hum" days of spring lengthen to the dragging heat of summer, the Camellia care schedule is likely to be pushed from our minds, or at best be given only slight thought. Of course no true Camelliaphyte could ever be accused of such neglect, any more than a mother would fail to care for her children. For these are some of our "children." But the average run of the mill Camellia grower who grows Camellias as only a small part of the over-all garden picture is prone to find more exciting things in the garden now. There are so many plants that bloom profusely during the summer months, and they tend to fill one's mind. With the excitement of the first flush of growth on the Camellias starting to harden off, there doesn't seem to be much that they have to offer for the next several months. This is a misconception, since a Camellia that has been grown properly with correct feeding, pruning, watering and T.C.L. has a beauty of its own without a bloom on it. The blossoms are merely a bonus.

If your Camellias are planted in the ground, you can be forgiven a bit of neglect now. For a Camellia that is planted in the proper soil to begin with will survive with a minimum amount of care. If the first feeding of the year has been applied, the plant can survive quite satisfactorily with nothing more than water during the summer. This means a good soaking occasionally. With only a cursory check of the soil while passing by on your way to some other pressing garden problem, you can determine if the soil is dry or still moist. Remember, a Camellia can be killed faster by overwatering than by underwatering. They prefer a moist but not saturated soil, but they can survive an occasional drying out. In fact I have seen a plant completely defoliate itself from lack of water and then stage a complete recovery when watered properly. I don't, however, recommend this as a general practice.

Camellias in tubs or cans require a more constant watch. They can dry out so fast during the hot summer months. All of the foliage you see above ground must have moisture for transpiration and this must come primarily from the moisture in the soil the plant is potted in. If you have provided your plants with foggers, a daily fogging in the early morning or evening seems to work wonders. If not, when watering the plants be sure they are well saturated. I recommend filling the tub twice and then follow with a good spraying of the foliage to clean them of any dust or other foreign matter. Incidentally, a good spray of water helps control aphids. The frequency of watering depends on many factors. The size of the plant in relation to the container, the soil mix, the length of time the plant has been in the container, and the temperature are the primary ones. Again, a check of the soil can tell you if they need water or not. A good mulch helps retain the moisture during the hot season.

If you are a more avid Camellia fan, you may have some grafting you planned in the spring but didn't quite get finished. Grafting is often done with satisfactory results between the middle of June and the middle of July. I have had good luck with the hard-to-graft Reticulatas during this period. Be sure to select well seasoned new growth for the scions. The grafts seem to take faster at this time of year. The new growth should be hardened off enough by this time for any replanting or repotting you had planned. Be sure to soak them thoroughly to settle the new soil around them. Needless to say, be sure to use a good soil mix.

With a minimum amount of care you should be able to survive the drag of summer with your plants in a condition to give you their most rewarding of blooms to brighten your dreary winter months ahead.

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Fuchsias

by Morrison W. Doty

San Diego Fuchsia Society

Summer has been slow in coming to Southern California in recent years. This makes the heavy bloom late in coming on. But if our fuchsias have been pruned, pinched back, and well nourished, they will enter the hot dry season with a sturdy growth and constitution to resist drouth, pests, even vacation neglect in the better condition for the later blooming. Remembering their warm moist rain-forest origin, the *adaptability* of Fuchsias to our cold coastal fog, and then long hot rainless months of summer, remains always a delight. However, they do need assistance and understanding care to adapt to our problem water and soils, great variations in humidity. Recalling their original habitat, and trying in some degree to imitate the atmosphere they love, will reward us well.

Get a fogging nozzle to put moisture in the air around the plants on very hot low-humidity days; check all baskets and containers for moisture at least two or three times a week (even in cool cloudy weather). Metal liners in hanging baskets will conserve moisture best. Don't spray the hot leaves of a dry plant, or one that has been sunburned. Water fuchsias in the coolness of morning or evening in hot weather. A sharp spray on both the upper and under sides of foliage refreshes the plant, and dislodges some pests. Any plants that may have defoliated from heat, drouth, or pests, should be treated much as frosted or badly sunburned plants, using very little water, until they begin to leaf out again, and can accept it. Strong sprays or fertilizers are not in order then either. Container plants may be helped greatly by a location change; to be cooler, warmer, or helped by better light or sun exposure to sturdier growth.

Although the accepted idea of a protected East or North exposure for Fuchsias prevails as the best and easiest place for their care, growers are now asking for varieties that may live in more exposed locations, even in full sun. Most of us will always prefer our flower in its natural sun-filtered protected setting. But aided by the hybridizers, and the Fuchsia's own adaptability, there have been developed varieties for warm valleys, and even sun exposure. **Glendale, Thetis, Treasure, Southgate, New Fascination, Sierra Blue, Tennessee Waltz,** and **Rose of Castile**. We have proved the first- and last-named able to accept direct sun in our garden.

Fuchsias that are well-fed regularly with a good fish-base fertilizer, every ten to twenty days, and properly watered, are surprisingly free from most plant diseases. However, worms and caterpillars may bother any plant in damp spring weather. Control these with DDT. Other pests later in the season are sucking insects, such as thrip (causing leaf-curl), and red spider (causing rusty spots on top of leaves), also white fly, and aphids. A general *preventive* spray is used before hot weather, or any infestation. Malathion is the controlling ingredient and all sprays should be used as mildly as possible to get results.

When shopping for Fuchsias buy some light or orange-colored plants to make bright baskets to perk up dull spots in your garden. Some lovely Ferns will complement your Fuchsias with dignity and beauty.

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Irises

by James E. Watkins

President, San Diego-Imperial
Counties Iris Society

Your irises are tired out after putting forth those nice blooms, and they crave some good nourishment, fertilizing and ample watering. This is the one time of the year when they will appreciate a fertilizer higher in nitrogen than you would ordinarily use. One of the more popular is a 10-10-10 combination, and some have even used urea which runs to 45% nitrogen. My own intention this year is to use a relatively new type, one prepared especially for vegetables, but which has been used successfully on avocados and citrus, and which should work equally well for irises. It runs about 15% nitrogen, 16% phosphate, and 5% potash, plus having traces of calcium, iron, magnesium, manganese, and zinc, a combination that should appeal to the hungry iris.

If you are not transplanting, put a handful around each clump early in June, cultivate it in, and water thoroughly. If you are dividing your irises, or planting new ones, you can mix some in the new planting holes, or put it around the newly planted rhizomes a week or two after planting.

There have been arguments as to when is the best time to transplant iris in Southern California. Although they can be transplanted any month of the year where there is no danger of freezing, some say that a month after bloom time is ideal, others recommend September or October. Last year I transplanted from June to November, and the earlier planted ones made a much better showing than those planted later. Most directions say to transplant every three or four years. This might apply to some varieties that are not partial to our temperate climate, where they produce only one or two increases a year, but those that do well here, (and many can produce from six to fifteen or more new plants) can best be divided every year. These will generally produce better stalks also, though a few varieties do better in two-year clumps.

There are arguments too about whether to cut roots off or not. Some snip them half off, some leave them whole, and others cut off every root flush with the rhizomes. I used the last method on many planted last year, and those planted early in the season did fine. The advantage of clipping all the roots, plus soaking them in a half-and-half solution of clorox for an hour and then rinsing thoroughly under running water, is to minimize the possibility of bringing nematodes or other pests into the garden. Nematodes are in many gardens already, but if you are using a control for them, it makes sense to disinfect all new plants you get unless they come from the most unimpeachable sources. In any case, cut the leaves back a half or a bit more, the only time leaves are cut back on irises, other than to remove dead ones or remove portions badly infested with leaf spot or other disease. If your garden magazine advises cutting leaves back, be satisfied that you know better than the advisor. It is also a good idea to leave freshly dug and trimmed rhizomes in the sun for at least an hour or two prior to planting again, as rot and other troubles can start otherwise.

If your own garden is free of nematodes and your roots are plump and healthy looking, you may prefer to leave the whole roots on. Certainly this method anchors the plant better in the soil, an advantage with small children or pets around, whereas the root-clipping method means you have less of a hole to dig.

During the past year there has been more and more talk about the value of animal fertilizers, with evidence to the effect that steer manure is usually so heavy with salts that it makes our naturally salty soil all the worse. Now it is questioned whether dairy manure is much better. Probably the best way to use either would be to prepare ground for next year's planting and hope a heavy winter rain will leach it sufficiently. And there is evidence that either type probably harbors a host of plant enemies, making it advisable to think of other ways of adding humus to the soil. Certainly it is better to rotate irises and most plants between sections of the garden if at all possible, and if you have a vacant bed that can be prepared for next year's planting, you may add all types of humus to it and then perhaps fumigate the soil. Plan on transplanting irises into it next year, and then similarly treat where they are now. If your beds are all filled up, then it is all the more important to keep adding humus, fertilizer, and mineral trace elements to keep any plant in top condition, and to be on constant guard against pests.

Connoisseurs' Corner: Preparing for the regional iris trek this year mean planting many new varieties. Among the very best of these are FIRST SNOW, a 1966 introduction, white, frilled, fluted, of extremely heavy substance; NINEVEH, 1966, a startling new red arilbred; COOLHEAD and JACKPOT, 1965, both with white standards and widely flaring blue falls, large flowers held very high; DISTANT HILLS, 1965, well formed intense blue; STARCHED FABRIC, 1965, smallish, pert, white with yellow shoulders, extremely heavy substance; NIGHT SONG and SWAHILI, two new "blacks" of 1965, well formed and of ample height; GRINGO, 1964, vigorous, greenish cream blend; WILD PEACOCK, 1964, a dark one, iridescent with a peacock blaze; TAHITI SUNRISE, 1963, the best pink in the garden this year; large, clean thick-petaled. These will stay expensive a few years, but are a good investment now in conversation pieces, trading material, and food for the soul.

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Bonsai

Trees In Miniature

by George Fujimoto

Pomegranate at least 25 years old. This tree will produce flowers and fruit.

The growing interest in Bonsai throughout the country calls for an increasing exchange of ideas and knowledge on this fulfilling art and hobby. From the novice to the professional, we continue to learn, share and enjoy this living, creative accomplishment.

What appears to be developing in our western Bonsai culture is the individual interest and personal participation in the fundamentals of training, care and maintenance of these "trees in miniature." This does not necessarily mean an exact duplication, but rather the hobbyist's interpretation of the particular tree or "material" that is being developed.

Too many people think that any tree placed in a pot instantly becomes a Bonsai. However, this is far from the case. The basic rules which govern the style, form and ultimate creation may be found in quite a few publications. Interestingly enough, the "Rules" are not the result of idle practice or arbitrary decisions, but represent the studied result of nature's own habits.

These fundamentals, when practiced by the novice and advanced student alike, produce a symbol of nature's beauty and the outdoors—a creative and transportable form of advanced diminuative gardening. The little trees become individual reflections of the unity of nature and man. The Bonsaist develops an affinity to each individual tree—which in return becomes a part of his effort. With careful study and patience, something of his own expression and vision goes into these "Miniatures of Nature" from the singular beauty of the Chokan (upright style) to the admirable accomplishment of the group style. The pride of the owner is nurtured by his careful blending of the natural habits, phenomenon and environmental influence which are interpreted and portrayed by human design in the Bonsai.

In Japan there are many hundred years history on Bonsai—it may be 800 years or more. During these long years—sometimes very high in fashion —sometimes it comes into and goes out of fashion. Through these years they created many styles and shapes, but all Bonsai.

Some Simple Rules in Growing Bonsai Trees.

1. February and March are the best months to start evergreen Bonsai trees. October and November are suggested for starting the dwarfing of deciduous plants.

2. Training of the tree includes confining the roots to a small container by trimming back the thick main root leaving fine feeder roots.

3. Soil should be light and porous and should be rammed with a pointed stick to ram the soil between the fine roots. Give no more water at a time than is essential and only fertilize in minute doses.

4. Nip off the top l e a d e r to strengthen the branches left. Wind 3-gauge wire about the base of specimens, twisting it carefully to prevent injury to the tissues. Use 12-gauge wire on the branches and bend the wired branches gently into the shape that you wish. Thin the branches with sharp nippers to give character to the tree.

5. Continue to give it your regular attention year after year and through the association of tree and trainer through the years, it may be called Bonsai.

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Third & H Sts., Ramona 92065

SWEETWATER JUNIOR GARDEN CLUB
First Monday, 7:30 p.m. Meets at home of Temporary President
Temp. Pres.: Cleoves Hardin 469-3038
9195 Harness Rd., Spring Valley 92077

VISTA GARDEN CLUB
First Friday, Vista Rec. Center, 7:00 p.m.
Pres.: Mrs. W. L. Larsen 726-3622
320 Mar Vista Dr., Vista 92083

VISTA MESA GARDEN CLUB
Second Tuesday, 2 p.m. Family Association Center
Pres.: Mrs. Clara Haskins 465-0910
2352 El Prado, Lemon Grove 92045

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and Southern California Exposition

presents

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Entry Supervisor, Fairgrounds
Del Mar, California 92014
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